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814
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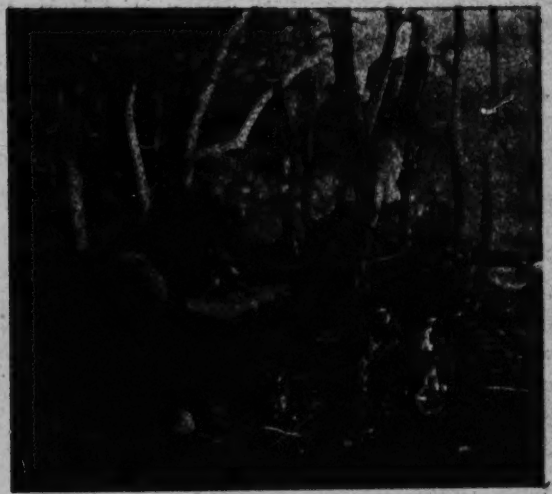
Young girl and boy accompany fathers as men bring yams from pool to the ceremonial ring. There the yams will be

[fr. 15, (1)]

baked by placing them atop pieces of anthill heated to a glow by wood fire, then covering the yams with hot earth.



MAN LIGHTS FIRE beneath chunks of anthill. When the pieces are red-hot, burning wood below them will be brushed away.

11-Goodrich 2-6 (1964, 1965) 1963 ORD Third ORD

Microfilm F-4 (USA, 1962) 1962 CCD Tiwi CCD

[P. 15, (8)]

FATHER PAINTS GIRL to show how it would be done if she were to be initiated. Although no children of group were considered ready, ceremony was held to maintain benefits thought to accrue to the Tiwi who had undergone initiation.

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YOUNG GIRL AND BOY accompany fathers as men bring yams from pool to the ceremonial ring. There the yams will be

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[181]

part of Tiwi speech. Poetic license in pronunciation and syllabification often occurs. The Tiwi have high regard for the linguistic ability needed to become a good Tiwi composer and singer, and instruction in the art of song composition and delivery is given to the initiates. Each initiate must perform in the *Kulama* before he can be considered a "graduate." According to my Tiwi informants, this requirement is the hardest of all, and it is also the reason for there being no set age for initiation. The old people are said to watch the young, and when the observers consider them mature enough, they swoop down upon their choices "like chicken hawks, without warning"—as the Tiwi say—and start the initiates along the path to adulthood.

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[171]

As far as I know, the *Kulama* ceremony has no parallel elsewhere in Australia. And there are many interesting questions that come to mind concerning the origin of the *Kulama* as it exists today. For instance, why is instruction in the preparation of a poisonous yam that is not part of the daily diet considered so important for initiation into adulthood? What is the origin of the idea that a yam has power over good and evil, and health and sickness? Why is such prominence accorded a yam in what is principally a hunting and gathering society?

[262]
[224]

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Any answers to these questions must be highly speculative, for the origin of the ceremony and its development lie in the unrecorded history of the Tiwi. However, I believe the following statements may well be valid.

[262]

Instruction in the natural resources of the land was considered vital to becoming an adult. Because the *Kulama* yam is poisonous and is not widely distributed, it was never part of the regular diet, but it could be used in economic emergencies if properly prepared. Instruction in its preparation was therefore extremely important as a potential survival measure. However, since the Tiwi live in a favorable environment, it is highly probable that such emergencies were very rare, so it was considered expedient to hold annual instruction periods. Because knowledge of

[See P. 15 (A) for other part of caption and picture — Analyst]

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HOT EARTH over baked *Kulama* yams is removed. Yams that are to be eaten at end of ritual must be resoaked in water.

[824]

SOME COOKED YAMS are cut, peeled, and mashed. Water and paint are then added. Yams are always handled with respect.

[951]
[950]

MEN RUB MASH on bodies to insure health, then do so to the uninitiated young, whose health is paternal responsibility.

[P. 16, (A)]